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Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons

Working paper submitted by Iraq on behalf of the States members of the League of Arab States

Our recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons are as follows:

1. Disarmament and international security issues can be addressed sustainably only through multilaterally agreed solutions in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. All Member States must therefore abide by their individual and shared commitments to foster multilateral cooperation.

2. Instead of bringing about regional and international peace and security, the possession, acquisition and development of nuclear weapons will increase instability. The complete and definitive eradication of nuclear weapons is the only way to eliminate the threat or use of those weapons.

3. The Conference on Disarmament, the Disarmament Commission and the First Committee of the General Assembly play a key role in multilateral efforts to promote disarmament, in accordance with the mandate established by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, held in 1978, which affirmed that measures of nuclear disarmament have the highest priority.

4. The Arab States are concerned at the continued stagnation of the United Nations disarmament mechanisms, in particular the Conference on Disarmament, which is the sole international forum for multilateral negotiations on disarmament, and call for practical steps to be taken to revitalize those mechanisms. To achieve that objective, Member States are urged to demonstrate flexibility and the necessary political will.

5. The Arab States reaffirm that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament

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regime, and that action should be taken to strengthen compliance with the Treaty and ensure its universality.

6. The Arab States recall the advisory opinion issued by the International Court of Justice on 8 July 1996 concerning the legality of the threat of use of nuclear weapons in which the Court found that there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith, and bring to a conclusion, negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control.

7. The Arab States welcome the efforts made towards the voluntary reduction of the number of nuclear warheads, but emphasize that such action cannot substitute nuclear disarmament efforts aimed at the complete eradication of those weapons. The relevant legal obligations and resolutions must therefore be upheld.

8. The Arab States welcome General Assembly resolution 68/32, entitled "Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament", adopted on 5 December 2013.

9. The Arab States welcome the declaration by the General Assembly of 26 September as the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons and its decision to convene, no later than 2018, a United Nations high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament to review the progress made in that regard.

10. The Conference on Disarmament, as the sole multilateral negotiating body on disarmament, should be urged to devise, in accordance with the request of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, a comprehensive and balanced programme of work that will include the commencement of negotiations concerning:

- A comprehensive treaty that would prohibit the possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transport and use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, and provide for their destruction;
- Nuclear disarmament with a view to gradually eliminating nuclear weapons within a specified time frame, resulting in their complete, non-discriminatory and verifiable elimination;
- A ban on the use and future production of fissile materials for military purposes that also addresses the stockpiling of those materials by nuclear-weapon States, with a view to ensuring that non-proliferation issues do not overshadow efforts to promote disarmament;
- International arrangements to provide non-nuclear-weapon States parties with unconditional and legally enforceable security guarantees that they will not be subject to the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against them by the five nuclear Powers, until such time as nuclear weapons have been completely eliminated.

11. The Arab States reaffirm the importance of universalizing the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and facilitating its entry into force. States that have yet to ratify that Treaty should be encouraged to do so, particularly nuclear-weapon States, which bear fundamental responsibility in that regard.

12. The Arab States underline the importance of the Second Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, held in Nayarit, Mexico, on 13 and

14 February 2014. The Conference heard that no party has the capacity to address the aftermath of deliberate or accidental nuclear explosions. The Arab States welcome the offer of Austria to host the next meeting on the topic.

13. The Arab States affirm the inalienable right of States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, as provided for in the Treaty. They reject attempts to restrict or limit that right while privileges are granted to certain States not parties to the Treaty.

14. The Arab States emphasize that States' national decisions to benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy should be respected; no steps should be taken that could hamper or negatively affect international cooperation on peaceful technologies with those States, so long as they remain committed to the safeguards agreements concluded with the International Atomic Energy Agency. It should be affirmed that the Agency is the authority with sole responsibility for verifying State compliance with commitments under the Treaty.

15. The Arab States reiterate their support for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones throughout the world, particularly in the Middle East. The establishment of those zones would strengthen efforts towards nuclear disarmament, enhance the security of the concerned States and bring us closer to our overarching goal, namely the realization and preservation of international peace and security.

16. The Arab States reaffirm that the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction is a collective responsibility. The resolution on the Middle East that was adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, concerning the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, represents the principle and central pillar of the Treaty indefinite extension package.

17. The Arab States emphasize that there is a pressing need to implement the practical steps to enforce the 1995 resolution on the Middle East that were contained in the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference and note that the Secretary-General and the three co-sponsors of the 1995 resolution, in consultation with the States of the region, were mandated to convene a conference in 2012 on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction.

18. The Arab States call for that Conference to be convened in 2014 at the earliest opportunity. Any postponement will impact negatively on the credibility of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the review process and the resolutions agreed by the international community. All States of the region, with the exception of Israel, expressed their readiness to participate in the 2012 Conference.

19. The Arab States call upon the Agency to halt the technical programmes provided to Israel. Cooperation with Israel on nuclear issues should be suspended until it accedes to the Treaty as a non-nuclear-weapon State and places all its nuclear facilities under an International Atomic Energy Agency comprehensive safeguards agreement. Those steps are a necessary precondition in order to promote the universality, credibility and effectiveness of the Treaty.